CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIFTY-NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 5 September 2000, at 10.10 a.m.

President: Mr. Petko Draganov (Bulgaria)

GE.00-63323 (E)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 859th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Let me at the outset, on behalf of the Conference, extend a warm welcome to the participants in the 2000 United Nations Disarmament Fellowship and Training Programme who are observing the proceedings of this plenary. I am sure they will benefit from exposure to our forum, and especially from the presentations that will be made to them on various aspects of our work. I wish them a fruitful and useful stay in Geneva.

I have no speaker inscribed on my list for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor? I see the United States of America. Ambassador Grey, you have the floor.

Mr. GREY (United States of America): Mr. President, I spoke at our last plenary meeting on the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and its relationship, or should I say, the lack thereof, to the United States national missile defence policy. This was made clear - very clear - by President Clinton's speech at Georgetown University last Friday, 1 September 2000. It is my intention to ask that these remarks be circulated as a document of the Conference.

With President Clinton's speech, there are no more excuses for not getting down to work in the Conference on Disarmament and fulfilling the task we have already agreed to do, namely the immediate commencement of FMCT negotiations. At the same time, the Conference can initiate consideration of issues related to nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space in appropriate subsidiary bodies. If the Conference cannot begin this work now, at this late point in our session, it should at least make a solid recommendation in its annual report that it start work next year. There is simply no longer any excuse for this Conference not to get to work.

The PRESIDENT: Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this point? That does not seem to be the case.

Before I adjourn this meeting, I should also like to inform you that the draft annual report of the Conference to the United Nations General Assembly, as contained in document CD/WP.511, will be available in all official languages in delegations' boxes on Friday, 8 September 2000. It is my intention to conduct the first reading of the draft annual report at an informal plenary meeting following the plenary meeting on Thursday, 14 September 2000.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 14 September 2000, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.